



# MUCKROSS PARK PARENTS' ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER

*Christmas 2012*

## Dear Parents and Guardians

The Muckross Parents' Association Committee would like to wish you and your families, and the community of Dominican College Muckross Park a very joyful and a very peaceful Christmas.

We have had a busy and enjoyable first term and all the members on our committee are really working hard to represent the 270 plus families that now make up the Parents' Association. If you would like to contact any of us please email us at [muckrosspa@gmail.com](mailto:muckrosspa@gmail.com).

We enjoyed a very educational talk from Professor Fiona McNicholas on Teen Mental Health which was extremely well attended and we thank you for your support. We will be continuing our series of parents' evenings with a talk on the 5<sup>th</sup> February 2013, presented by the Anti-Bullying Centre based in Trinity College which we feel is timely and will be of great interest. We look forward to seeing as many of you as possible on the night. A reminder will be sent in the New Year via email.

We are continuously updating our web page and we will have some excellent reference articles on parenting teenage children over the next few weeks so keep an eye on the school website.

A huge thank you to Ms. Lundy, the Staff, Pupils and Parents for making the Carol Service such a joyful, festive night. It is always a happy evening and this year was no exception.

As always it is your support, whether through membership, contribution of time or both that makes a vibrant and involved Parents' Association and we appreciate it all.

*Have a wonderful holiday and a Happy New Year*

*Niamh Sheridan, Chairperson Muckross Parents Association*



OPENING OF SCHOOL MASS

## News

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## 1st Year News ...

... From primary school to secondary school is big leap but the warm welcome the first years got from everyone in Muckcross made the transition so much easier. As is tradition, each class group has a name and this year the four classes were named after Dominican saints – St Albert, St Thomas, St Margaret and St Catherine. For the girls, there was a lot of firsts to deal with – having a locker, taking on new subjects, moving from room to room for some subjects and finding their way around such a big building. Some were even wearing uniforms for the first time. Thanks to the help of their fifth year buddies, their year-head, Ms O'Brien, their class tutors who encourage the girls to come to them with any problems and the wider school community, everyone seems to be settling in very well.

Halloween was a highlight, as the girls were permitted to come to school in fancy dress and a prize was awarded for the best costume. Grace Lannigan won for her excellent Mad Hatter rig out.

Another highlight was the First Year Evening for parents organised by the Parents Association.

All first year parents were invited to the evening which was as social as it was informative for the very large turnout. The girls, performing in their choir groups, provided the entertainment. The St Catherine's and St Albert's choir performed "Mama Mia"; St Thomas's and St Margaret's performed, "We're all in this Together".

The parents got a tour of the school from the students and afterwards got to mingle with each other over coffee and tea provided by the Parents Association and delicious buns made by the girls themselves. The Principal Ms Lundy spoke great words of encouragement as did Sr Nora who had a surprise for the girls – a beautiful candle with the Muckcross crest, a lovely keepsake for the future. Yet another highlight was the table quiz with Gonzaga First Years which was great fun.



The first year parents also got to get together in November for a well-attended coffee morning organised by the Parents' Association. Many have expressed an interest in having further informal social events – so keep an eye out in your email for information in the New Year.



## 2nd Year News ...

The second year cohort has had a busy first term with their increased workload reflecting the transition to the second year of the Junior Certificate programme.

As well as classwork, the whole year took a History Field Trip to the National Heritage Park in Ferrycarrig, Co. Wexford in October. A number of teachers travelled down with the girls.

They enjoyed a video and guided tour of the Park and also managed to squeeze in a little bit of shopping in Wexford town before returning back to Dublin.

During Science Week Mr. Fitzsimons and Ms Doyle or-

ganised a visit from Dave's Jungle where the girls had a great time touching, holding and learning about different animals including a snake, crocodile, iguana, scorpion and a tarantula.



The French and Spanish students also enjoyed a breakfast during term where they got to taste interesting, and exotic, breakfast foods. The German students, as an alternative, had a party where they sampled German treats.

The fancy dress theme for 2nd years this Halloween was food. The girls showed great imagination and flair with costumes including girls dressed as carrots, a fork, a fridge and a sandwich. The winners were dressed as cannibals!



*"Christmas is not a time nor a season, but a state of mind. To cherish peace and goodwill, to be plenteous in mercy, is to have the real spirit of Christmas"*

*Calvin Coolidge (30th President of the United States)*







### 3rd Year News ...

On Tuesday the 13th of November the third years got a visit from Jungle Dave. Jungle Dave brought along with him lots of unusual animals and creatures. He started off by showing us a very long Burmese python, and told us a bit about the snake.

He then showed us an older and longer Albino Burmese python which we were all allowed lift up and touch. We saw how the scorpion would glow under UV light and everyone got a chance to hold the scorpion and the tarantula, if you weren't too scared!

We then got to see an alligator turtle and an actual alligator. We watched the alligator turtle eat a carrot and we got to feel the alligator.

As everyone left we got to feel the scales of the iguana who sat watching us through it all. It was a really interesting experience and we would like to thanks all the teachers who helped organise it.



3rd Year CIMA Quiz Participants

Another highlight was the trip to the Titanic Centre, Belfast in November. Read Niamh Ferry's report on the trip



*On the 6<sup>th</sup> of November everyone in 3rd year visited the Titanic Centre in Belfast. We had been looking forward to the trip for weeks and it was great to have something to look forward to coming back after midterm!*

*We set off at 7:45 am from the school which was too early for most of us. Some people had a snooze on the bus trip up which took 2 and a half hours but everyone was chatting so it went very quickly!*

*When we arrived at the Titanic Centre we split up into groups and began the tour. The five floors in the centre gave us lots of information on the history of Belfast and how the Titanic was built.*



*We learnt all about the ship and the different social classes on board. Interesting exhibitions about the crash and the aftermath in the media were engaging.*

*After the Titanic Centre we drove to the Buttercrane Shopping Centre in Newry for some retail therapy.*

*We arrived home at about 7.30 pm, almost twelve hours after we had set off! All in all an amazing day full of new and exciting experiences. But it couldn't have happened with the organisation of the history department, and all the teachers who accompanied us on the trip and to them a very big thank you!*

### 4th Year News ...

TY reports on how their exciting year so far is going:

When we began this year, we chose our options; since then, the different cookery classes have made some delicious food, the novice puppeteers have some puppet masterpieces well underway, the horticulture class are quietly cultivating away, the fitness students are decidedly out of breath and we at the yearbook are scribbling away at our little magnum opus.

Many of us participated in the Marian College production of "Hairspray". The work involved has been incredible, but the result has been even more impressive; they make our school proud.



We were visited by Dublin Mountaineering Partnership, who brought some of our year on a fabulous hike up the



Dublin Mountains, producing a few blisters and a lot of memories.

An Australian ex-police officer who worked as a kind of CSI walked us through a homicide case and the evidence that led to the killer's arrest, giving us a fascinating look into the world of forensics.

For the November Remembrance Service, we were Ms Lundy's right-hand women, leading the school with the sound of our chants.



#### 4th Year news cont'd ...

Since September, we have had several excellent guest speakers, including Christina Noble of the Christina Noble Children's Foundation and a speaker from Barnardo's - so inspiring, we spent the weekend in town shaking buckets to help fundraise for the foundation. A group of transition year students worked on the Team Hope Campaign, collecting shoeboxes for children in impoverished countries so they can have presents at Christmas.



Many of us have also begun work on earning our Bronze Gaisce Award, which involves at least three hours a week of hard work on a chosen skill, a physical activity, and some class of social work. This is a huge commitment for us, flaky adolescents that we are, but it is giving us an opportunity to step outside our comfort zone.

In the high point of our career as rapt listeners, TD Lucinda Creighton, Minister of State on European Affairs, came to inform us on the EU and the implications of Ireland hosting the presidency of the EU. She was an engaging and interesting speaker and a nice end to our term of excellent visitors.

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#### 5th Year News ...

After only a few weeks back in school transition year seemed like a distant memory. Everyone was back concentrating on working hard and studying. We were delighted to welcome 5 new students into our year and hopefully they have settled in really well already.



Throughout the term we have been involved in Irish, French, and German inter schools debating competitions, which though challenging were also an amazing experience.

We were lucky enough to go to see a production of An Triail which was staged in Belvedere College and which really bought the play to life.

We also had a Retreat day for the whole year which was really enjoyable and had a half day session on study skills which was very helpful and timely.

We have enjoyed getting to know the first years and being their' buddies'.

Many of the Fifth Years have started rehearsals for the musical with Gonzaga, which takes place next term. All in all a very busy term but a great one.!

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#### 6th Year News ...

6th year has begun with a busy start for all students in their final year in Muckross. Students attended the Higher Options event in the RDS meeting with many representatives and presentations from a wide range of third level colleges. Brian Howard, Guidance Counsellor, delivered a very informative talk to the 6th year girls and their parents on the CAO Application system.

Day-trips have taken place for students studying biology, geography and music as part of the leaving cert curriculum. Irish students studying An Triail attended a production of the play in the O'Reilly Theatre in Belvedere College. 6th year students have also taken part in a retreat day in early November.

Choir rehearsals were undertaken for the Christmas Carol Service and the 6th year girls performed the traditional rendition of 'Ring Christmas Bells' on the night.

Everyone is looking forward to a well-earned break over the Christmas period after a busy first term of 6th year.







The **Christmas Carol Service** was held on Monday 10th December in The College Chapel with candles lighting the way from the school to the church.

Head girl Sadhbh McLoughlin gave the welcome and it was an uplifting evening with beautiful music from the chamber choir conducted by Mrs Rossell and the orchestra conducted by Ms Forde.



The fantastic musical talent in the school was there for all to hear. Muckross Park Staff choir also performed. Mulled apple juice and mince pies were served by the Parents Association in the School following the Carol Service.

### THE CANTEEN

The new canteen opened this year and after a student vote a name was chosen: **The Hub!**



The range of meals, hot and cold, snacks and drinks on offer has proven instantly popular and everyday the menu is posted on the school's website and in the foyer on the Y floor and also on the whiteboard beside the canteen.

Anna Whitaker, 6th Year, DeValera, Muckross Student Council is enthusiastic: "Overall, the canteen has affected school life at Muckross in a very positive way; providing nutritious and delicious food for students and staff at low prices. **We love our new canteen!**"

There have been some teething problems but these are being ironed out on an on-going basis. The seating area in the canteen has been improved by the Student Council since the beginning of this school year.

The positioning of the tables was rearranged for a more practical way of getting around and more tables were ordered to cater for everyone in the canteen, outdoors and on the corridors. The queues are still big and managing the demand for places and solutions are being worked on.

### NEW AMNESTY SOCIETY

An Amnesty International society has been established in Muckross this year. It is a society open to all years and led by a group of 5th and 6th years. Our launch was held at the Halloween dress up day.

Our main aim is to spread awareness and promote the education of human right abuses throughout the world today. We will be running different campaigns during the year and encourage all to get involved. - Asiya Ahmed, 6<sup>th</sup> year.



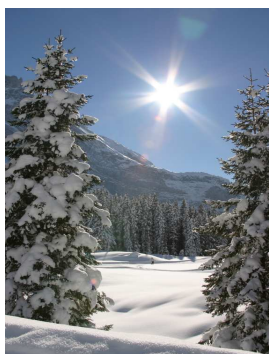
### ART REPORT

#### Muckross Park pupils chosen to display at the RHA Gallery Charity Art Exhibition

The RHA Gallery hosted a Secret Art exhibition in aid of the Chernobyl Children's International Charity on the 23<sup>rd</sup> November. Over 330 paintings were up for sale and were all priced at €150.

There were paintings by well-known artists, students from the RHA, celebrities like Bono, The Edge, Colin Farrell, Ryan Tubridy and some art students from Muckross Park. Nobody knew who painted the pictures, so you just bought what you liked, and it was only when the pictures were collected a few days later, that you found out who the artist of your selected painting was.

What a wonderful idea to raise funds for this charity and well done to the girls from Muckross Park who did our school proud.



*"I will honour Christmas in my heart, and try to keep it all the year"*

*Charles Dickens*

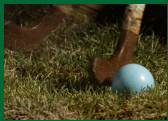


## DRAMA Review

A review of "A Likely Scenario", performed by Emer Halpenny's drama class

A new extra-curricular option this year has been a weekly drama class given by professional drama teacher Emer Halpenny on Wednesday afternoons. So far it is made up of 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> years – though everyone is welcome -- and the term culminated on November 28th with a performance for parents in the assembly hall of "A Likely Scenario", a hilarious, politically correct version of Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs.

The scary wicked queen was played with great energy and fun by Ellen McCarthy from second year while Avril Horgan from first year was a sweetly innocent Snow White. The rest of the troupe played everything from the dwarves – or "towering giants" as they were called, to the mirror which had to tell the mean old queen the truth "Alas if worth be based on beauty, Snow White has surpassed you cutie" and even the trees in the forest. In the end, the Queen and Snow White became firm friends. After the performance the parents were treated to a series of improvisations from the girls and in her speech afterwards, the principal Ms Lundy congratulated the girls on their talent and self-confidence and for their excellent performances after only a 10 week term of drama. The classes resume in the New Year.



## Muckross Park College Sports Winter 2012



### HOCKEY

The hockey season has been off to a great start this year with many teams playing well in their league matches. Participation is high and our Senior 1 team has set a very high standard leading from the top. They are 2nd in their league section at the moment and the cup is due to begin soon.

The Senior 2, 3 and 4 teams are progressing well in their section. The Junior A, B C and D teams are all doing particularly well in their league sections so far.

The Junior A's unfortunately were knocked out in the first round of the cup but they have high expectations in the Plate competition. The Junior C and D teams have yet to concede a goal in their league games!

The Minor A team is also unbeaten in the league and they are through to the second round of the cup. The Minor B, C, D and E teams are all progressing well in their league sections.

The first years have had many 8-a-side friendly matches and tournaments to enable more skill development and match-play. The 11-a-side league will start after Christmas for the A and B teams.

### BASKETBALL

The Senior team are progressing well in the South Dublin League, with a win and a loss so far.

The Under 16 team are unfortunately knocked out of their Leinster League but are advancing well through the South Dublin League.

The first and second years have an excellent attendance at training both during the week and on a Saturday morning, in preparation for their leagues that commence after Christmas.

### CROSS-COUNTRY

There has been a great participation across all ages at cross-country training on a Tuesday and Wednesday after school in Herbert Park.

There has been two practice races so far this season in preparation for the East Leinster Race after Christmas. Our runners have achieved great results at the races with the Intermediate Team even winning gold medals at the Blackrock race.

### TENNIS

Beginners tennis coaching has been available this term to first and second years with a great turn-out and will continue in the New Year.

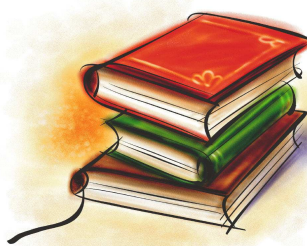
Well done to all the girls who have participated during the year so far. You are definitely our sporting heroes!





## BOOK CLUB REPORT

The librarian Ms O'Grady's monthly book club has been particularly popular with every year taking part – it has been such a draw for first years that they have had to split into two groups and meet on two different days. And as the bookclubs take place at 8am



that's a very encouraging sign! Knowing that a lot of girls will get book tokens for Christmas and that a lot of parents will want to give books to teenagers and the choice out there can be daunting, Ms O'Grady has kindly come up with this super gift-guide to help get all ages reading!

### Ms O'Grady's Fiction book recommendations for Santa (12 -15 (ish!) year olds)

**Louise Rennison's *Confessions of Georgia Nicolson* series.** There are 10 books in this series beginning with 'Angus, thongs and full-frontal snogging'. These are hilarious reflections on adolescence as penned by the fictitious Georgia Nicolson. Genre: Pink Lit (equivalent to adult Chick Lit)

**Cassandra Clare's *The Mortal Instruments* series.** There are 5 books in the series so far. The first is 'City of Bones' and the most recent 'City of Lost Souls'. Genres: Supernatural, fantasy, horror

**Robert Muchamore's *Cherub* series** of which there are 12 books. However, these books are page turners so can be read in a day. That's the 12 days of Christmas sorted! The first book in the series is 'The Recruit' and the final one is 'Shadow Wave'. Genre: Spy

**Ally Carter's *Gallagher Girls*** series is the story of a girl who goes to a prestigious spy school. So far there are five books in this series, the first entitled 'I'd Tell You I Love You But Then I'd Have To Kill You'. Genre: Spy

**The *Butterfly* novels by Irish writer Denise Deegan** is a trilogy about three teenage girl friends who attend an elite southside Dublin school, so you can imagine these books are loved by Muckross girls! The first in the series is called 'And For Your Information'.

**Sophie McKenzie's *Missing* trilogy** is hugely popular with the 12 – 15 year age group. It starts with 'Girl Missing' followed by 'Sister Missing' and 'Missing Me'. It covers the adventures of two adopted sisters. The novels are fast paced and full of twists and turns, danger, kidnapping and of course secrets.

**Malorie Blackman's *Noughts & Crosses*** series uses the setting of a fictional dystopia to explore racism. There are five books in the series of which 'Noughts & Crosses' is the first and 'Double Cross' is the last. 'Noughts & Crosses' is by far the most popular book in this series.

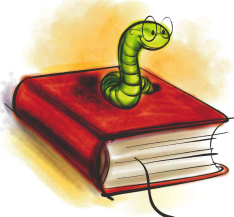
### A few titles/authors for the over 15s

**The *Fault in our Stars* by John Green** is narrated by a sixteen-year-old cancer patient named Hazel, who is forced by her parents to attend a support group, where she meets 17-year-old Augustus Waters, amputee. It is insightful, irreverent, raw, funny and tragic.

**The *Perks of Being a Wallflower*** is a coming-of-age novel written by **Stephen Chbosky**.

Through the eyes of Charlie we travel through the uncharted territory of High School: first dates, family dramas, friendships, death, sex, drugs and The Rocky Horror Picture Show.

Finally for an inspirational read what better role model is there than **Katie Taylor** and her recent book ***My Olympic Dream?***



### And Finally ...

#### *Label Up!*

The lost property is piling up  
So please put your daughter's name on everything!



### Dates for your diaries

**5th February 2013**

Talk presented by the Anti-Bullying Centre  
based in Trinity College